



Welcome to the Steyning Downland Scheme June Newsletter!

Critter of the Month: Cockchafer

The infamous 'Doodle Bugs' of WW2 were named after a local term for this lumping great beetle. It's a bit of a giveaway about their style of flying

Cockchafters emerge in spring from their underground pupae, sometimes in quite large numbers. They then buzz around on warm, summer evenings, crashing randomly into things for about 6 weeks, while they lay their eggs. They're highly sought after by feeding bats and they can form an important part of a bat diet. Just remember to duck. Thanks to Phil Godbold for sending in the photo.

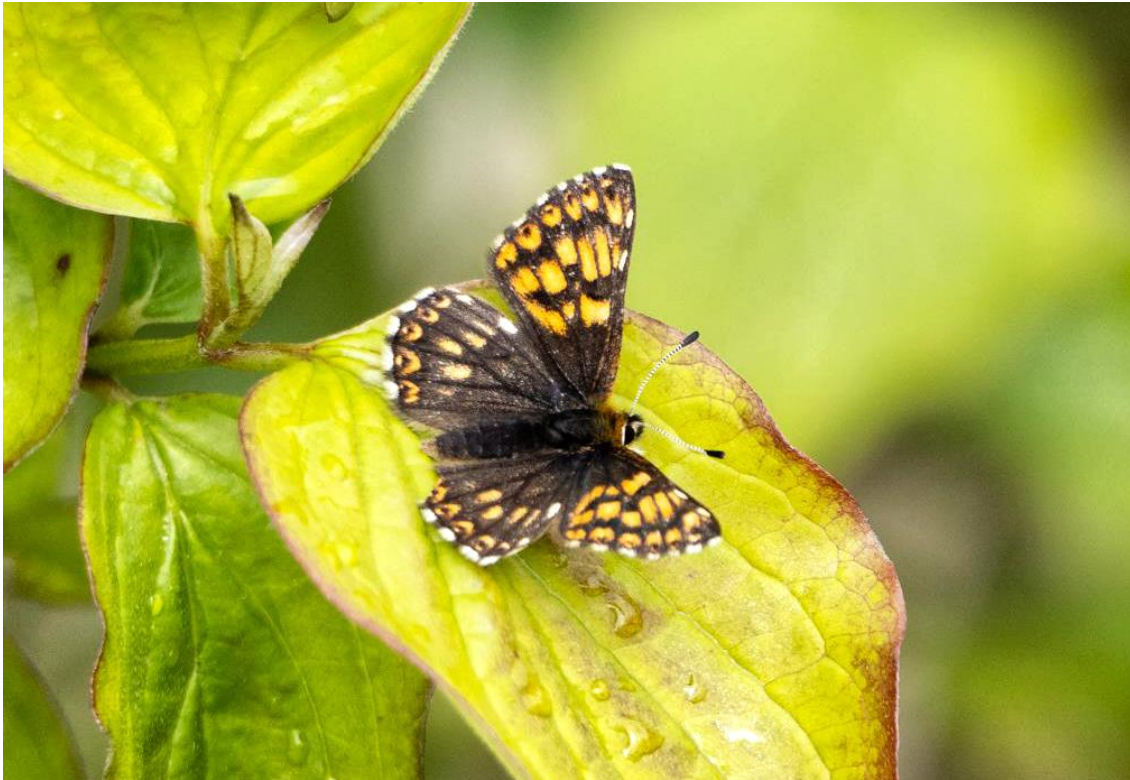
Recent Events

Some brief highlights from a selection of our recent events::



Butterfly Training Day

Despite atrociously inappropriate weather, Neil Hulme came up trumps for us again on 22nd May, with some marvellous sightings of our new Duke of Burgundy breeding colony, amongst other things. Please [Contact Sarah Quantrill](#) if you're interested in being part of our butterfly monitoring team (*with thanks to Robin Johnson for the Duke pic below*).



Songs of the Dawn

The birds were almost queuing up to be seen (and heard) at Andrew Armitage's dawn chorus walk on 5th June. Sightings included Raven, Red Kite, Cetti's Warbler and rare views of a singing Nightingale, plus a Greater Spotted Woodpecker feeding young at the nest - 26 species in all!



Glow-worm Hunt

Things didn't go quite according to plan for Simon Jackson's Glow-worm hunt last Wednesday night. At the beginning of the walk, your Venerable Editor pompously announced that Simon had never failed to find Glow-worms on any of his hunts. Nearly two hours and a lot of tramping later, we returned to base without seeing a single one. BUT

we did find a magnificent Stag Beetle (with thanks to Phil Godbold for the shot below) AND Simon has kindly offered to lead a second hunt [more on that below too].



Upcoming Events

If you missed any of our recent events, don't despair - we're just getting started! Just click on the event names below to book your place:



Botany

Survey: Saturday 26th June,
10.00am

Join our team of plant surveyors as we continue our annual monitoring of the wild flowers of the Steyning Downland. A great way to grow your botanical knowledge! Newbies and well rooted experts welcome. For more info., [please contact Anna](#). FREE



Conservation Volunteers Training

Day: Saturday 26th June,
10.30am - 12.30pm.

Essential training for any wannabe SDS Conservation Volunteers. FREE. ACT SOON - ALMOST FULLY BOOKED!



Social Dog Walk: Sunday 27th

June, 10am-12 noon

Join Christine Supiot for a morning stroll around the Steyning Downland. Learn some useful tips and tricks about training your dog to behave well in the

countryside. For all the family. £5 adults, under 16s go free.



Wildflower Identification

Workshop: Thurs 1st July, 2pm.

Always wanted to know the difference between a Bird's-foot Trefoil and a Horse-shoe Vetch? This is your opportunity to find out! We've teamed up with experts from the Sussex Botanical Recording Society for this training afternoon in the beautiful surroundings of the Steyning Rifle Range. £5.00 adults, under 16s go free.



Glow-worm Hunt: Sat 3rd July, 9.45-11.30pm: Undeterred from the lack of Glow-worms on our first expedition, we're back for another hunt! Please bring a torch and wear stout footwear - £5 adults, under 16s go free.



Rifle Range Open Day: Sunday

4th July, 11am - 3pm.

Join archaeologist and Rifle Range expert, Justin Russell and discover the fascinating history of probably the best preserved WW II Rifle Range in Sussex. Free event, but donations on the day welcomed.

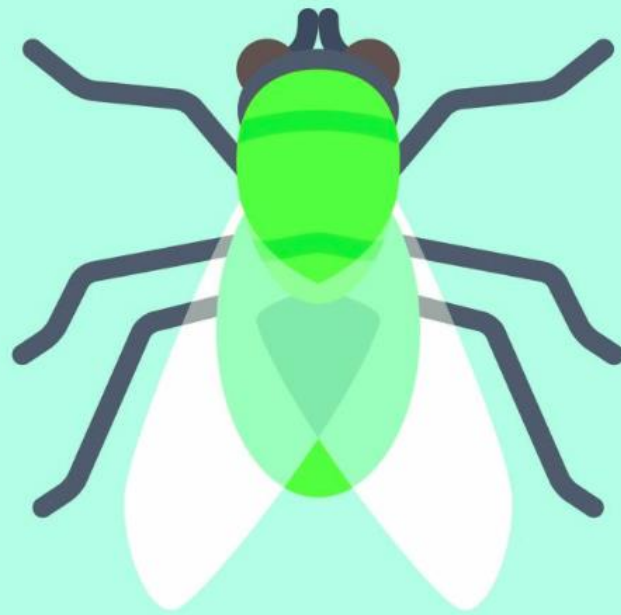


Mindfulness of Nature: Saturday

17th July, 11am - 1pm.

Something entirely new for the SDS!: How can enjoying nature help to develop our emotional intelligence and bring wholeness to our lives? Join holistic psychotherapist, Laura Steven on the Steyning Downland and find out. Laura is an accredited member of the British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy. £5.

Big Bug Survey



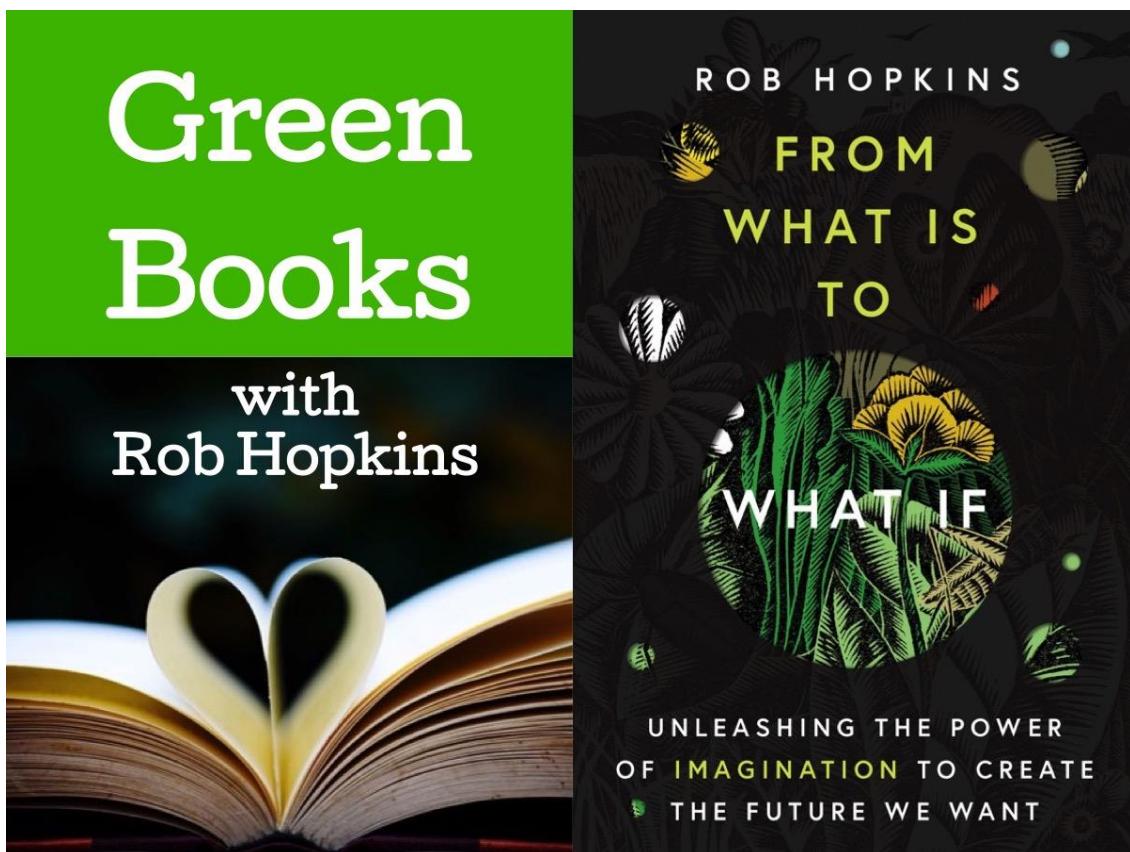
Bugs **Matter**

National invertebrate conservation charity, Buglife has launched an ingenious survey which anyone can join during your daily commute!

Sign up and they will send you a 'splatometer' that you can use to count the number of bugs squashed on your number plate after a car journey. It's actually a really good way of measuring

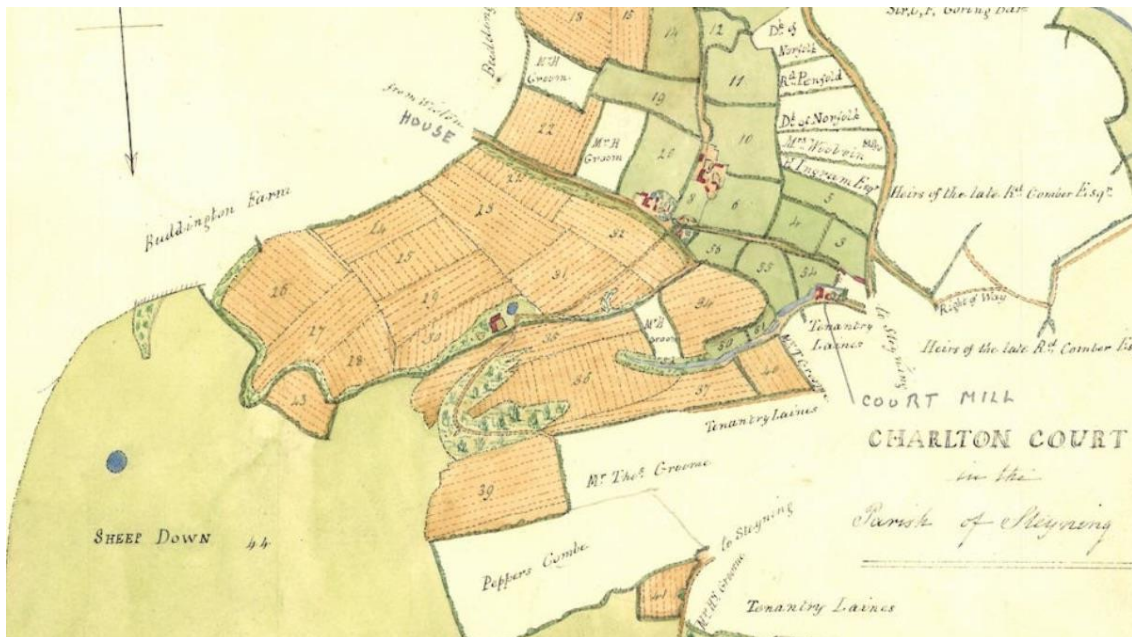
the number of insects in our environment, and there's been a lot of concern about that recently. [Join the Buglife campaign here.](#)

Book Talk



Rob Hopkins is an interesting bloke; a 'green' activist who dares to talk about a positive future. He's giving a Zoom talk organised by [Greening Steyning](#) about his new book: "From What Is to What If: Unleashing

the Power of Imagination to Create the Future We Want” which looks as though it will be worth a listen - [tickets here](#).



Last time we drew our reader's attention to a map of the Steyning Downland by Mr William Figg in the 1820s, which shows all of the Rifle Range as one big, ploughed field. We mused over whether Mr Figg has slipped up, as most of it is now 'ancient', species-rich chalk grassland.

Well, a huge 'thank you' to local historian, Dr Janet Pennington for her detailed and very helpful feedback which concludes: ". . . This Mr William Figg would not have erred in his map-making.". Which leaves us in a bit of a conundrum - could our ancient chalk grassland really not be ancient at all, but a dastardly Georgian counterfeit?? Whatever its origins, it's still packed with a good range of wild flowers.

[Experiences from other sites welcome!](#)

Friends



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but you're just too busy?

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our work, simply by
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Steyning Downland

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Thanks for reading!



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